SOME NEW BOOKS.

Chancellor Pasquier's History of His Time.

Since the record of Mme. de Remusat's observations was given to the world, no light so copious and searching has been thrown upon the Napoleonic era as is cast by the first volume of the *Memoirs of Chancellor Duc Pasquier*, edited by the Duc D'AUDIFFRET-PASQUIER, and translated by Charles E. Roche. (Charles Scribner's Sons.) The author, Etienne-Denis Pasquier, was born in 1767, and died in 1862, having thus lived nearly a century, and having witnessed the most momentous events which have taken place since the beginning of the Christian era. Here is a man who was 16 years old when the peace of Versailles terminated the War for American Independence, who was 22 when the States-General assembled, who saw the execution of Louis XVI., who was imprisoned only the day before the ninth Thermidor, when the overthrow of Robespierre took place; who beheld all the changes which culminated in the establishment of the Consulate and the Empire, who held under the Emperor Napoleon the important offices of Prefect of Police and Councillor of State, and who, under a subsequent régime, became Chancellor of France, and bequeathed the title of Duc to his posterity. In the course of a life unusually prolonged he had been a watchful and sagacious student of every form of government under which France had passed—the Ancien Régime, the Convention, the Directory, the Consulate, the Empire, the First Restoration, the Hundred Days, the Second Restoration, the reign of Louis Philippe, the Republic of 1848, and the Second Empire. He felt that his opportunities of observation had been remarkable, and he began the composition of these memoirs in 1822, continuing them from time to time, but leaving instructions that they should not be published until at least thirty years after his death. The first volume of his reminiscences and reflections, of which an English version is now before us, carries us to the beginning of Napoleon's Russian campaign.

What distinguishes this book from almost all other memoirs relating to the same period is its impartial, dispassionate, judicious character. The author came of a family of lawyers; his father and grandfather had occupied distinguished positions in the Paris Parlement, and he himself lived to attain the highest place in the French judiciary. By birth, family traditions, and early associations he was an adherent of the old monarchy, and he was glad to see it restored under constitutional limitations, but his predilections did not prevent him from rendering justice to the merits of Napoleon and appreciating some of the benefits resulting from the new régime. The opinions which he expresses with regard to certain persons and events agree so closely with those of Taine that one cannot but surmise that the historian may have had access to these first-hand materials in manuscript. That the volume before us is a contribution of extraordinary value to the student of the history of France for the period with which it deals will be patent to the reader upon nearly every page. We know of no book in which the attempt to give a fair conception of its contents is embarrassed by such a difficulty of choice. But since some selection must be made out of the mass of interesting matter, we have preferred to indicate what the Chancellor has to tell us about the Ancien Régime during its last and brightest years, about the stupendous work of reorganization effected by Napoleon, about the members of Napoleon's family, and about some of his Ministers, including conspicuously Talleyrand and Fouché. It will, of course, be understood that, in this book, we hear but little of Generals and armies, the author being a civilian and judiciously confining himself to subjects of which he deemed himself competent to treat.

I.

Looking back some forty years afterward on the prosperity of France from 1783 to 1789, Chancellor Pasquier expresses the conviction that, from the earliest days of the monarchy, his country had, at no period, been happier than she was then. She had not felt the effects of any great misfortune since the collapse of Law's financial system. The long-lasting Ministry of Cardinal de Fleury, inglorious, no doubt, but wise and circumspect, had made good the losses and lightened the burdens imposed during the latter part of the reign of Louis XIV. If, since that time, several wars, undertaken with little foresight and waged with less skill, had compromised the honor of her arms and the reputation of her Government; if they had even thrown the finances of France into a somewhat alarming disorder, it is pronounced but fair to say that the confusion resulting therefrom had merely affected the fortune of a few creditors, and had not tapped the sources of public prosperity; on the contrary, what is styled the public administration had made constant progress. If, on the one hand, the State had not been able to boast of any great Minister, the provinces could show many highly enlightened and sagacious intendants. For example, roads had been opened connecting numerous points, and had been greatly improved in all directions. We are reminded that these benefits were principally attributable to the reign of Louis XV. Their most important result had been a progressive amelioration in the condition of agriculture. The government of Louis XVI had continued to favor this wise policy, which was not interrupted by the maritime war undertaken on behalf of American Independence. Many cotton mills had sprung up, while considerable progress had been made in the manufacture of printed cotton fabrics, and of steel, and in the preparing of skins. Chemistry was already giving people a glimpse of the assistance it was shortly to render to all useful arts. Men like Lavoisier, Berthollet, Fourcroy, and their pupils were entering upon their career. The Revolution took Lavoisier's life, but the training of his fellow workers who survived him took place during the reign of Louis XVI., to which they belonged. Great attention was paid to their labors by this sovereign, who also encouraged agriculture by every means at his command. The importation of merino sheep, which has done so much for the farmer and the woollen manufacturer in France, must be placed to his credit. He also established model farms, thus placing at the disposal of agriculturists the resources of theory and facilities for their application.

It must not be inferred that the author of these memoirs shut his eyes to the reality of the public prosperity which France was enjoying in 1822 when he began to commit his observations to writing. He declares himself fully cognizant of the improvement in the condition of the country districts, and he is aware that the fabric of society resting on this solid foundation, even though its outward aspect might be humble, was far preferable to a grander superstructure hiding a less solid substratum. He is ready to admit the advantages which have accrued as the results of the revolution, as, for instance, the partition of landed property, which, so long as it does not go beyond certain limits, unquestionably tends to increase wealth. Nevertheless, when he questions his reason and his conscience as to the possible future of the France of 1789, if the revolution had not burst upon it, and ten years of destruction had not weighed upon it, if San Domingo, for instance, had continued pouring its treasures into it, and the successive betterments to which he has referred had not been checked by great catastrophes, he is convinced that France at the time when he is writing (1822) would have been richer and stronger.

Chancellor Pasquier indeed recognizes a distinction between the general condition of the country in 1789 and the relations existing between the country and the Government. The provincial administration might have been admirable, and yet the central Government might have been discredited by irremediable defects. He contends, however, that, as a matter of fact, the central Government was neither a hard nor a rapacious one. All things connected with it which were not de jure tempered by the laws were tempered de facto by the usages and customs of the day. The right of property was respected, and for the immense majority of Frenchmen there was almost complete individual liberty. It is true that this liberty was not inviolate, since, in spite of repeated protests from the Parlement, the power of arrest, imprisonment and exile was exercised by means of lettres de cachet. During the last years of the reign of Louis XV. lettres de cachet had been issued not only to obtain the triumph of such or such a religious opinion, but also to gratify the hatred, revenge, or caprices of one or the other of the sovereign's mistresses, and perhaps even of the very Ministers who had this terrible weapon at their disposal. But this odious scandal had ended with Louis XV. On the accession of Louis XVI., M. de Malesherbes had been instrumental in opening the prison doors to prisoners of State, and during the course of the reign up to 1787, the use of lettres de cachet had been moderate enough to be looked upon rather as the violation of a principle and an insult to justice than as any real injury to society. Moreover, lettres de cachet at this time were hardly ever called into use except at the urgent request of families desiring to put a stop to the follies of some of their members. The famous Mirabeau, for instance, had been imprisoned at Vincennes at the request of his father. Summing up, the Chancellor insists that, with the exception of a few persons whose acts caused the Government peculiar irritation, the rest of the citizens enjoyed the most complete liberty. One was free to speak, to write, and to act with the greatest independence, and one could even defy the authorities in perfect security. De jure, the press was not free, yet anything and everything was printed and hawked about with impunity. The most sedate personages, even the magistrates themselves, who ought to have curbed this licentiousness, actually encouraged it. If, from time to time, some of the most zealous and conscientious of them denounced in the Parlement any flagrant breach of the laws relating to the press, their action was treated as ridiculous, and, as a rule, led to no result. It is submitted that if this was not liberty it must at least be acknowledged to have been license.

It is further pointed out that what remained of the feudal power was hardly more than a word bereft of meaning. All the substance had been absorbed by the Crown. There still remained certain pecuniary manorial rights, but they simply constituted a form of property like any other, and could be held by a commoner as well as by one of noble birth. The power of the seigneurs over the bodies of their vassals no longer had any existence, except in fiction, about all that was left to the seigneurs of the old feudal power being the shadowy obligation to protect their vassals. At the time of his accession, Louis XVI. did away with everything that might still be found oppressive in the exercise of a seigneur's authority. Hence there was between the nobility and the other citizens just as there was between those citizens and the clergy, only one question in dispute, namely, that of pecuniary privileges, and, especially the privilege enjoyed by the two higher orders of not being taxed, as was the third order, either in form or at fixed rates. The influence of the clergy, finally, did not make itself felt between 1783 and 1789 any more heavily on the individual than did that of the nobility. The concessions granted to Protestants in the matter of their civil status had met with no obstructions on the part of the ecclesiastical power. Nothing could better illustrate how tolerant it had become. The higher clergy, in truth, had become reconciled to the views known as the "light of the century." With regard to the curés who came into actual contact with the people, they merely gave a paternal care to their flocks, which also absorbed the better part of their incomes.

Whence came, then, the passion for reform, the desire to change everything, which made itself manifest at the close of the eighteenth century? In the opinion of this eyewitness, it was due rather to a great stirring up of ideas than to actual suffering. So much had been written about these ideas, and they had been so greatly discussed, that doubt had been cast upon everything. The sovereign authority had been in a more particular manner broken in upon, and the court of Louis XVI. had not known how to restore the waning prestige of royal authority, even in the matter of the exterior glamour which oftentimes suffices to insure the obedience of the masses. In a word, the irreligious, critical, and philosophical spirit, the craze for all sorts of utopian chimeras, the lowering of the moral standard, and especially the loss of respect for institutions consecrated by time, and for old family traditions, all these things fostered the development of passions which were soon and forever to sweep away the old French society, the Ancien Régime. When the States-General met, people differed about details, but all were agreed as to the necessity of overthrowing everything that existed.

II.

We pass over those chapters of the book which deal with the destructive period following 1792, and come to the work of reconstruction undertaken by the Emperor Napoleon. Old France had been destroyed and new France needed organization. Everything was budding in the latter, and elements of cohesion were not lacking, but nothing was in its proper place. No doubt the new chief of the State had this advantage on his side, that no institution having taken root in France since the beginning of the revolution, there was nothing standing in his way, and he could, therefore, give free reign to his conceptions. It is our author's belief, nevertheless, that Napoleon would have considered himself more fortunate had he been able to lay his hand on some old institution, some time-honored social custom, even some national prejudice which had stood the brunt of centuries, and upon which he could have laid the foundations of an edifice. We are told that more than once he expressed his regret to this effect, showing himself in this respect far superior to the men of talent who surrounded him, whose training had taken place during the revolution, and who had derived from it their prejudices in favor of a general levelling, thus rendering all building up an impossibility. They were merely capable of destructive work. Nothing in this book reflects more credit on the author's intellect than his exposition of the theory that two things are requisite to constitute an organized social system. Such a system requires, no doubt, a written legislation in harmony with its material position; but by the side of this written legislation there must be found an unwritten one composed of usages, customs, accepted ideas and manners, and this latter one is the only one which governs social life in the innumerable cases where written laws cannot make themselves felt. Concerning written legislation, the Chancellor has previously pointed out with what happy results the first Consul devoted his attention to it with the aid of his Council of State. As Emperor, he could do no better than pursue his work as First Consul, and we are assured that he never ceased giving his best attention to it. At the time of our author's entering the Council of State, the civil code and the code of civil procedure were completed, and the commercial code was under discussion. The penal code and the code of criminal procedure were in course of preparation. To recast all the country's legislation was not, in Pasquier's opinion, a rash undertaking, at a time when every idea and principle of legislation had been expounded and discussed; when advantage could be derived from the most diversified experience and when the Council could boast of lawyers of the first rank such as Tronchet, Cambacérès, and Portalis. The principal and real merit of the Emperor, considered as a statesman, lies in having conceived the necessity of the undertaking and of having pushed it forward with the activity characterizing all his doings, and which he had the faculty of communicating to others. The amount of work which he got out of his Council of State during the first six or seven years of his reign is described in these memoirs as stupendous. It is also acknowledged that he knew so well how to apply his intellect to matters which must have been completely foreign to him that not only was his interference never misplaced but he often brought to them most useful knowledge.

With regard to the unwritten legislation, the need of which Chancellor Pasquier points out, it is obvious that here the difficulties were far greater, and we learn that, in the beginning, the Emperor stood almost alone in his conviction of its necessity. With respect to this matter, not only was he badly served, but scarcely understood by the majority of those about him. Some of them were governed by a blind fear of restoring what was styled the old régime; in the case of others, their limited intellect did not permit of their conceding a mean between the old régime which their thoughtless wishes would have recalled to life, and that of the revolution which they held in execration. Nothing, it seems, was more difficult than to make the men of the revolution understand that the only way of consolidating and securing newly acquired positions and fortunes against the vicissitudes of events was to make class distinctions de facto, if not de jure, and to create within the higher or lesser ranks of the social order a certain number of those hereditary institutions by which a throne must be surrounded if it is itself to become hereditary. Anomalous, indeed, was the state of mind of the men of the revolution who had gone over to the Emperor. They had fully accepted the idea of an absolute power committed to the hands of one man. The altitude of this power had become so prodigious that, owing to the effect of distance, it no longer dazzled their eyes. Moreover, at the time of consenting to serve under it they had known enough to set a high price on their services. But, in order that the throne should not be for them a source of alarm, they would have liked to see it standing by itself, and they were irritated by the ranks which gradually interposed themselves between them and the throne. On the other hand, the man who occupied the throne was too shrewd not to understand that anything which stands alone and unsupported cannot last long in this world. He therefore sought props in all directions, securing them from the old as well from the new France, for he was not the man to believe that ten long centuries had been absolutely wiped out by events that had occupied but ten years. It therefore, in his opinion, became indispensable to bring about a fusion between the past and present, and, until such a fusion took place, it could rightly be said that the new work was not complete.

One long step toward such a fusion had been made by the Concordat and the reëstablishment of Catholicism as the State religion of France. A minor move in the same direction was the foundation of the Legion of Honor. A more important step was taken when Napoleon resolved to give to France a new nobility, and to set up this nobility in the face of the other, which, although abolished by law, still lived in the memory of every one. The elements were not lacking for the formation of a new order of nobility. Military glory is of all glories that which finds most ready acceptance for the titular honors conferred on it, and, in all times, the winners of battles have easily taken rank in the highest circles of society. They have always been the founders of the most illustrious families, beginning with the reigning dynasties. Titles, however, are nothing when unaccompanied by wealth, and no amount of inherited renown can resist poverty for any length of time. It was necessary, therefore, for Napoleon not only to create nobles, but to endow them and to so far modify the laws of succession as to permit the estates of the nobility to descend to the eldest sons. The domaine extraordinaire, the free disposal of which the Emperor had preserved, and which was composed, besides the domains set aside in the conquered provinces, of moneys derived from assessments on the enemy's land, served as a fund for the endowment which the Emperor distributed on so magnificent a scale among all the men whom he wished to reward, in the first place, in his army, from the Marshals down to the officers ranking lowest, and also in the different branches of the public administration and the court. All these endowments, which were made majorats or transmissible to eldest sons, were at the same time coupled with a title and reverted to the crown in case of the extinction of the male line of the holder. The Emperor's idea was not only to create a new nobility, but to fuse it with the old one, and to that end he gave to all the persons of ancient name who had rallied under his Government titles other than those which they had borne previous to the Revolution; and, in spite of their repugnance, they were compelled to accept them. M. Pasquier was an exception, for he was made a persona, a title which had existed in his family under the ancien régime.

To sum up, in spite of the jarrings inseparable from the beginnings of an institution by which so many various interests were affected, and which, while satisfying some, could hardly fail to offend others—in spite of the ridicule attached to the manner in which some of the new titles were worn, even among those of the highest rank—the new nobility was not long in securing recognition throughout the country, and it experienced a still lesser difficulty in obtaining such recognition abroad where it presented itself with the prestige of military glory. In France it was especially military men who set great value on this new system of rewards and showed themselves most keenly alive to its advantages. Several of them, it is true, failed wholly to grasp its spirit and meaning, for M. Pasquier, in his capacity of Councillor of State, received a good many petitions for promotion in the ranks of the nobility couched in the same terms as though the petitioner were asking for regimental promotion. One thing is certain, namely, that the creation of the new nobility accustomed France once more to hereditary distinctions, and, at the time of the Restoration, this essentially monarchical institution facilitated to a remarkable extent the reinstatement of the old nobility in its title. It enabled the monarchy to insert in the charter so conciliatory a clause as the following: "The old nobility is to reassume its titles, the new nobility is to retain its own." The important service rendered at the time of the Restoration by the nobility which was of Napoleon's creation did not prevent, however, its importance from being afterward considerably lessened by the cancellation of its endowments, thus depriving it of the advantages of wealth which more than ever, as time went on, were to prove indispensable for the keeping up of social distinction.

III.

In one of the later chapters of this volume Chancellor Pasquier discusses the personal characteristics of the Bonapartes. He begins by acknowledging that, collectively considered, they were of no common mould. Their good qualities and their defects, their vices and their virtues, are not to be measured by the ordinary standard, but bear the stamp of traits peculiarly their own. What especially distinguished them was an obstinacy of will and an inflexibility of purpose. The Emperor Napoleon, it will be remembered, had four brothers and three sisters. The indomitable stubbornness just referred to was to remove from his control two of his brothers. The one known as Lucien, and afterward as Prince de Canino, a title given to him by the Pope, is described as having a fiery soul. He was ambitious and greedily fond of money. Public affairs had all the more attraction for him because he had played an important part in them on the 18th Brumaire, and he could flatter himself that his firmness on that day, so fraught with peril to his brother, had greatly contributed to the latter's success. He deserted the court at the time his brother reached the summit of grandeur and when Napoleon was in a position to promise the highest destinies to all the members of his family. On Lucien's becoming a widower, it was impossible to persuade him to renounce his project of marriage with a divorcée, who had been his mistress for some time past. Sooner than yield he went into a voluntary exile, from which he was not to return until after many trials, which finally led him to England. During his stay in Italy he seemed to make it a point of honor to show his loyalty and devotion to the Pontifical Government, whose subject he had become.

Between Napoleon and his brother Louis a misunderstanding arose from the moment Louis ascended the throne of Holland, and it subsequently had the most serious consequences. The character of Louis Bonaparte is one of the enigmas of the period, and receives more than passing mention at the hands of the author of these memoirs. It is acknowledged that the man possessed some estimable qualities. He had a profound sense of rectitude, but he was mistrustful and extremely sensitive, and these characteristics were aggravated by the suffering resulting from a sickly constitution. He had married Josephine's daughter, and the naturally jealous bent of his mind soon led him to conceive the most insulting suspicions concerning his wife, suspicions which were soon justified by the far too easy manners of the woman with whom he was mated. Violent scenes repeatedly occurred between him and Hortense, and we are assured that his principal motive for accepting the Dutch crown was the opportunity afforded of removing his wife from the licentious court of his brother, and the hope that in Holland he could compel her to conform to a mode of life more in harmony with his ideas and tastes. On the throne, however, he fared no better than he had in the married state, his life being more taken up with its duties than with its pleasures. He became honestly Dutch, devoting himself to his subjects, and defending their interests, heedless whether he could do so with any chance of success. Napoleon had sent him to reign at Amsterdam in order to render it certain that Holland would remain obedient to his will, and that his orders would be obeyed there as implicitly as if the country formed one of his own provinces. King Louis, on the other hand, sought to be an ally of France, but an ally whose interests should be looked upon and reckoned with as having an importance of their own. Under such circumstances, the two brothers were bound to quarrel in a short time, and eventually Napoleon ordered one of his Generals to occupy Amsterdam. The indignation of Louis at this act knew no bounds, and, if he is to be credited, his first impulse was to defend his capital to the last extremity. When he saw that there was not the slightest hope of his rash resolve receiving support, he determined upon abdicating and putting his son in his place. His behavior on this occasion was unquestionably generous and disinterested. Previous to leaving Holland for Töplitz, in Bohemia, he sold a small estate which he owned near Utrecht, and carried away with him a sum of only two thousand dollars in gold and a few diamonds, which were his personal property. He left, in order to meet the pressing needs of the regency, the revenues for the preceding month untouched. The Queen, his consort, was then in France, and she never went back to him. In vain was every possible means employed to induce him to reënter French territory and there take up his abode. The French Ambassador in Vienna informed him in writing, and in the Emperor's name, that, as a French prince and a high dignitary of the empire, he must return to France before a designated date, under penalty of being considered a violator of the empire's Constitution, and being dealt with accordingly. M. Decazes was twice sent to him to obtain by the use of gentler methods the submission which his brother earnestly desired. It was all fruitless. Louis defied threats and remained obdurate to all entreaties. Meanwhile he was reduced to the greatest isolation and privations. The few persons who had accompanied him on his departure from Holland left him one after the other; he was ill and alone at Grätz, in Styria, when he rejected for the last time the propositions brought to him by M. Decazes. There is a current impression that Louis Bonaparte was the weakest of his family, but it is clear that he possessed its inflexibility of purpose.

Joseph, the eldest of the Bonaparte family, had ascended the throne of Spain after having occupied that of Naples. Witty, voluptuous, and effeminate although courageous, the most remarkable thing about him was that nothing in his incredible fortunes was to him a cause for surprise. Chancellor Pasquier heard him, in January, 1814, make the extraordinary claim that, if his brother had not interfered with his affairs after his second entry into Madrid, he would be still governing Spain. The author of these memoirs would account for this assumption of superior capacity by a trait peculiar to all the Bonapartes. No sooner had they set their feet on the path leading to royal honors than those most intimate with them never saw them for a single instant belie the seriousness with which they took the highest positions: they even ended in believing that they had been called to them as a matter of course. They had the instinct of greatness. Joseph displayed at the very outset of his brother's elevation such impatience to see himself in possession of a similar rank, that Napoleon was wont to say laughingly: "I do believe that Joseph is sometimes tempted to think that I have robbed my eldest brother of the inheritance of the King, our father."

As regards Jerome, his brother Napoleon had, at the time when he left college, already made great strides toward omnipotence; consequently, Jerome considered himself born on the steps of the throne. This illusion was sufficient to give him in a large measure the faults which are too often the result of the way in which princes are educated. The period which was to elapse before Napoleon's downfall was scarcely more than long enough for Jerome to become notorious by the extraordinary audacity of his fits of debauchery, yet he still managed to preserve attached to his fortunes and to his person the princess with whom fate had mated him. It is pointed out by Chancellor Pasquier that the King of Würtemberg, who gave his daughter to Jerome, could not have been ignorant of the fact that he had contracted a first marriage in America with a lady of most honorable family, and that this marriage had been consecrated after the forms and laws of the country where it had been accomplished. It is true that the Emperor Napoleon declared this union null and illegal, on the plea that he, as chief of the family, had not given his consent to it, but our author expresses a doubt whether such a plea, borrowed as it was from the customs of certain sovereign families, would be valid outside of France.

Of Napoleon's three sisters, the eldest almost reigned in Tuscany, under the title of Grand Duchess. She made herself beloved there, and this fortunate province owed to her a gentle treatment denied to all other countries then united in France. She left, it seems, a pleasant memory behind her, in spite of the irregularities of her private life, which she did not take sufficient care to conceal. As to the Princess Pauline, wife of Prince Borghese, our author agrees with other contemporaries in pronouncing her the most beautiful woman of her time, and we are told that she hardly dreamed of giving prominence to any other advantage than that of beauty. She had gone to San Domingo with her first husband, Gen. Leclerc, and it was said that even the sun of the tropics had been astonished at the ardor of her dissipation. The fatigue consequent upon a dissolute existence shattered her health, and for a long time she was carried about in a litter. In spite of her poor health, however, she remained none the less beautiful. We come lastly to Caroline, the wife of Murat, and Queen of Naples, who bore a great resemblance to her brother, the Emperor. Less beautiful than Pauline, although endowed with more seductive charms, she possessed the art, without being any more scrupulous than her sister, of showing a greater respect for the proprieties; besides, all her tastes had vanished in presence of her ambition. She had at first found the Naples crown somewhat too small for her head, and greatly coveted the Spanish one, but in the end she became resigned to her fate, and wore with good grace the circlet which had fallen to her lot; we are even assured by Pasquier that she did so with no little amount of dignity. She was insane enough, however, to believe that her fortune could withstand the catastrophe which swept away that of Napoleon. In that extraordinary family, although each of its members possessed to the highest degree the clannish spirit, the most sacred engagements and deepest affections went for nothing against political combinations. Caroline took a hand in bringing about the downfall of her brother, to whom she owed all her grandeur. The author of these memoirs is inclined to think that she dealt him the final blow.

IV.

Chancellor Pasquier who, as Prefect of Police and Councilor of State, was qualified to form a trustworthy opinion, says that of the Ministers employed by Napoleon during the consulate and during the early years of the empire, those who obtained the largest share of his confidence, and who exercised most influence, were Fouché and Talleyrand. He allots, consequently, a good deal of space to a review of their characters and conduct. Fouché, who had been one of the Conventionnels who had voted for the King's death, and one of the most rabid proconsuls in the days of the Reign of Terror, was, for a long time, the veritable representative of the revolution in Bonaparte's environment. He it was who spoke on its behalf, and he was naturally prompted to do so, for there was hardly any of its crimes in which he had not participated. He had become its accomplice, coldly, dispassionately, and without any fixed object in view, living from hand to mouth in the midst of all its abominations, and never losing the presence of mind requisite for seeing everything, studying everything, and remembering everything. The *Directeur* Barras, with whom his relations had been of a very intimate kind, took Fouché out of the ranks of the Jacobins, and, after having intrusted him with several diplomatic missions, apparently to give him time wherein to get rid of his bad habits, finally made him Minister of Police. The eighteenth Brumaire found him at this post, and, although the work of that day had been accomplished without his having a part in it, and, to a considerable extent, without his knowledge of it, he, being always ready to go on the winning side, had not hesitated to offer his services to the lucky General. Bonaparte showed just as little hesitation in accepting them, and in retaining M. Fouché as Minister of Police he at one and the same time sought to give to the deposed party the guarantee promised to it, and to obtain immunity from the attempts of the Royalist party. Nevertheless, Napoleon's natural mistrust led him never to repose entire confidence in such a man, and taught him that it would be necessary to set a watch upon Fouché, who was about to be intrusted with the duty of watching others. It was from that day that Napoleon began to employ several police systems, exercising a check upon each other, and always trying to surpass each other in zeal, but at the same time filling his mind with prejudices, one against the other.

The part which M. Fouché had to play was a difficult one, but in our author's judgment it was the only one for which he was capable. Devoid of any solid education, and incapable of conceiving consecutive ideas or of diligently applying himself to any task, he never could have filled any other Ministry than that of police, which is carried on more by conversation than by the work of the closet. It was sufficient to be acquainted with the intrigues of the day and their ramifications. At that conjuncture it was especially necessary to be familiar with the names of individuals, and principally with those of men whose life in the past gave cause to foresee what they might be capable of in the future. For this purpose M. Fouché's antecedents gave him all kinds of advantages. He had seen everything and known everything, and he cared seriously for nothing. Without affection for anybody, of unequalled duplicity and perfidy, capable of sacrificing for the smallest interest the man who might have considered himself his best friend; possessing in the highest degree the impudence, if not the ability, needed by a liar; gifted with a light, superficial mind, often happy in repartee, and maintaining always the outward appearance of imperturbable coolness, it cost him nothing to betray all those who had dealings with him, ending with Bonaparte himself, though he had served him in the first period of his elevation with a fidelity that had all the appearance of devotion.

As the best way of retaining the good graces of a master so suspicious and so difficult to please as Bonaparte was to make one's self necessary, or to act so as to create such a belief, it is easy to form an idea of the lying reports and perfidious hints which M. Fouché must, for a long period, and especially at first, have thrust upon Napoleon. How many fatal resolutions may consequently be imputed to Fouché, and how many excellent measures may have been postponed through him, if not altogether stifled! By the author, who knew him well, we are assured that Fouché had not his equal in the art of making dupes, and he never practised this art more assiduously or cynically than in the case of the Royalists and of the *émigrés*. We are told that for years these parties were led to believe that the severe treatment to which they were subjected was the work of the chief of the State; that Fouché was their sole defender; yet, when, in after years, Pasquier was able to take cognizance of the reports emanating from his closet, and of the orders he had given, facts were discovered contradicting his professions; in other words, Fouché's reports were always couched so as to envenom the simplest matter, and the orders of extreme severity were found to have been signed by himself.

At the beginning of the Consulate, M. Fouché had met in the person of M. de Talleyrand a most formidable antagonist, and this circumstance produced a marked influence on his behavior. Fouché showed himself all the more attached to the revolutionary party because his rival seemed to act independently of him. Of course, in the case of two men of such calibre, there was no question between them of principles, or even of opinions. Both of them had long before made up their minds to entertain no principles or opinions save those appropriate to circumstances. The bone of contention between them was the acquisition of influence in public affairs and with the chief of the government; what each wanted was the opportunity and means of governing Napoleon, of enmeshing him, and of getting all they could out of him for their own advantage. They had not yet had time to find out to what a degree their scheme was beset with difficulty, not to say entirely impracticable. Of the two, M. Fouché took the longest time to undeceive himself as to their common mistake, and, in this showed comparative stupidity. With strange vanity, he imagined that the First Consul would never be anything but a more firmly established *Directeur*. He was under the impression that the Consular Government would never be anything else than an extension of the government of the revolution, only better defined and better carried out, and that the instruments brought into use during the revolution were, with a few exceptions, the ones that were to be employed.

V.

M. Talleyrand's innate perspicacity, and the advantage which he derived from his previous social position of having seen things from a higher pinnacle, of penetrating their significance and judging them with a more practised eye, soon made him see that a conqueror of Bonaparte's mould was not going to drag himself along the ignoble tracks of the men whose place he had taken; that he had higher ambitions, and that, although it might suit him to be the revolution's heir, it in no way suited him to continue its work. His mind once settled on this point, the clever courtier, for thenceforth M. de Talleyrand again became one, neglected no opportunity of gaining the confidence of the man whom he desired to charm and captivate. Entering without effort, but never too brusquely, into what he might know or divine of his master's secret views, he made the road of Napoleon's desires easy to him without seeming to trace it. This conduct met with great success and brought to him who practised it an indisputable influence. The charm of his seductive ways was all the more powerful for being clothed with manners which were just then rare. Added to a natural wit, stamped with a piquant originality, M. de Talleyrand possessed the distinguished and easy manners of the *grand seigneur* of former days, and he greatly contributed to the taste which his master was soon to acquire for such manners. In this respect he had the merit of coming forward as the natural connecting link between old France and new France, between the old régime and the new. It was manifest to Napoleon that Talleyrand could, without danger, be made use of for such a purpose, as there was no fear of his going too far. It would have been hard to meet with a man more on his guard than he was against a return to the former order of things. A restoration of the Bourbon throne would have been fraught with too many dangers for Talleyrand, the ex-Bishop of Autun, for him not to take special care to drive away from the mind of the First Consul everything liable to lead him to accept a part similar to that which Gen. Monk had played on the opposite side of the Channel. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs offered Talleyrand great facilities for warding off such a danger. It gave him repeated opportunities for discussing the political situation of France, the strength of that situation, and its immense possibilities, if turned to account by a genius so rare as Napoleon's, and always seconded by victories in war. The author of these memoirs has no doubt that, with the object of avoiding the danger which he most dreaded in those days, Talleyrand, for some years, believed that he could not do too much toward magnifying and extolling the ambitious genius which he later on sought to control, but which then laughed cruelly at his impotent efforts.

Chancellor Pasquier does not find it an easy task to trace the portrait of M. de Talleyrand. How, he asks, is one to reproduce such perpetually changing colors. The more one studies his character the less one fathoms it, and the fact is that it is difficult to find in him anything settled and stable. Capable of immoderate desires rather than of violent passions, susceptible of receiving every kind of impression, a prey to all sorts of tastes, even the most despicable, no means was repugnant to him when the question arose of gratifying his desires and contenting his tastes. It is our author's conviction that the world never produced a man more lacking in delicacy of sentiment than was Talleyrand, and more incapable of being influenced by any idea of morality. No one has so made sport of the world's opinion. He defied it incessantly, both in his private and public life, in his morals and in his political conduct. He seems to have been thrown into the arms of the revolution rather by the desire of shaking off the restraints of a religious vocation, which he had embraced regretfully and to which he had been condemned through a congenital deformity, and the craving for unbridled licentiousness, than by any of the liberal sentiments which he sometimes sought to parade, but which he oftener trampled under foot. Although a Bishop and a *grand seigneur* in 1789, it cost him little to be one of the earliest deserters from his caste and from his vows of ordination, and no one followed this path with a firmer step, for to the revolution Talleyrand sacrificed with equal readiness the goods and chattels of the aristocracy and the honors and privileges of the clergy. It is pointed out by Pasquier, however, that if, amid the ruins with which Talleyrand surrounded himself, there survived in him a sentiment of any kind, it was the sentiment of pride he derived from his birth and from the rank which he had occupied in the Church. This did not prevent everything appertaining to him, even his episcopal character, being placed at the disposal of the revolution. Since 1789 the only use he had made of his episcopal character was to transmit it to the new Bishops, who did not hesitate to violate the rules of the old church of France, and again to celebrate on the Champ de Mars the mass of the first Federation. La Fayette has recounted how the Bishop of Autun, when mounting the steps of the altar with the sacred vase in his hands, saw him near the steps in command of the National Guard, and, passing as close to him as possible, the Bishop whispered to him: "Do not make me laugh."

Besides being, so to speak, the chaplain to all the immoralities of the revolution, Talleyrand became, with the aid of the *assignats*, one of the principal financiers of the Constituent Assembly, leaving its halls only to go and gamble away his assignats on the green baize cloth of a gambling house, which was opened in the Pavilon de Hanovre by a M. de Castellane, the first to give Paris the scandal of a public gaming place. His good luck would have it that, during the existence of a Legislative Assembly, Talleyrand received a mission which took him to England, where he succeeded in putting himself on the footing of director and overseer of M. de Chauvelin, the ambassador whom the French Cabinet sent to England in those days. Talleyrand's residence abroad at this juncture saved him from the perils and evils of all sorts which he had in a great measure helped to bring down on his country. He was in Paris on the 10th of August, but he soon crossed the straits again, to be followed by a decree of accusation hurled against him by the Convention. At the time of the declaration of war which followed the execution of Louis XVI. he was expelled from England, being the only French citizen of any note then sheltered in that country against whom Mr. Pitt made use of the powers conferred on him by the Alien act. Thus no other resource was left to Talleyrand than to make a journey to America. After the Terror, however, he came back to France, having immunity guaranteed to him by a decree which his former friends wrested from the Convention. Thenceforth his life was spent in obscure intrigues until the day when Mme. de Staël lifted him out of distress by introducing him to the Directeur Barras, who shortly afterward gave him the portfolio of foreign affairs. He ill repaid the service rendered to him by Mme. de Staël, when the day came for her to draw down upon herself the anger of Napoleon. According to Chancellor Pasquier, it was under the Directorate that Talleyrand sent an emissary to the King, Louis XVIII., for the purpose of tendering him his services. As sole reward he asked for the duchy of Perigord and to be released from his ecclesiastical bonds. The King granted the first request without making any difficulty, but, with regard to the second, he replied that it was a matter which concerned the Pope. Thereupon negotiations were broken off.

It is well known that M. de Talleyrand did not allow his public duties to stand in the way of his private interests. We are told that a week after becoming Minister he had acquired five or six hundred thousand francs. This talent for making money never abandoned him; he exercised it with unvarying good fortune on all occasions, and no treaty is known, in the framing of which he took a part, that did not furnish him an opportunity. The treaty of Luneville, wherein it was stipulated that Austria should redeem the paper money which she had issued in Belgium, gave him the means of reaping enormous profits, for he bought up this paper money before anybody else knew of the stipulation. The secularization of episcopal domains in Germany and the arrangements which new territorial partitions occasioned were another and greater source of profit. Chancellor Pasquier heard them valued by well-informed people at four millions of francs. Of course, Talleyrand could not keep to himself all the fruits of his venality. He was willing to allow many of his co-workers a share, deeming it a good way of securing useful and faithful instruments. That his gains must have been immense is clear from the fact that they were sufficient to meet his enormous expenses, and to build up the fortune which he enjoyed in his later years. But for that fortune, it is probable that the latter part of his life would have been passed in oblivion and neglect.

Recurring to Talleyrand's lack of any delicacy of sentiment, the author points out that he did not even possess the kind needed to resent offence for any length of time. The sentiment of honest pride which springs in the human breast from a sense of offended dignity did not exist in Talleyrand, and his whole moral personality seemed covered with a hard and polished veneer over which insults and contempt glided without penetrating it. There was no sort of affront which he would not brush from his memory if he discerned the slightest advantage in becoming reconciled to the person who should have been an object of resentment. To him this seemed so natural that he felt genuine surprise when he saw his own advances rejected by one whom he had outraged. In his eyes the rejection of such advances merely showed a lack of intelligence. Lest, however, this portrait of Talleyrand should seem too indiscriminately black, it is acknowledged by Chancellor Pasquier that, when he liked, he could exhibit the most admirable taste in conversation. From his lips are quoted many mots and phrases which denote the most subtle and sure tact. It was, indeed, this faculty which first gave him his reputation in society. While giving Talleyrand credit for this merit, the author at the same time confines it to the occasions when he was able to prepare his language and his phrases; for, when taken unawares through some irritating circumstances, or if not warned to keep a guard upon his anger, it found vent in the coarsest words. If it be asked how such a man could play so important a part for so many years, the answer given in these memoirs is that he appeared at the right moment for himself in the midst of the most tumultuous times and the most complete social disorganization. At any other era his wit, in spite of its brilliancy, would have merely brought him the ephemeral successes which the salons can give, and it would assuredly not have given him the power of governing public affairs under an order of things wherein sound and conscientious talents and the respect of self and of public opinion would have been the conditions requisite for any man to occupy an important political position.

The first volume of this remarkable book ends as we have said, with the beginning of the year 1812. The forthcoming volume may be expected to carry us through the Russian campaign and the reverses of 1813 and 1814, through the first Restoration and the Hundred Days, and through the second Restoration up to the formation of the revolutionary government of Louis Philippe. M. W. H.

THE WIDOWER,

That Is to Say, the Man Who Has No Wife.

Do you see the man?

I do see the man.

What is that on his hat?

A weed.

What is that in his buttonhole?

A flower.

What does he mean by such a peculiar floral combination?

He is a widower.

A widower?

Yes.

Is that the widower style?

It seems to be.

Why is it?

It is emblematic.

How?

The weed is the emblem of sorrow; the flower, of hope.

Sorrow for the wife that is gone, and hope that he will meet her hereafter?

Oh, no.

No?

No; hope that he will meet some one to take her place right away.

How long has she been among the departed?

Two or three years.

Does he mourn her loss?

Sure; that's why he wants another to drown his sorrows.

Will another do that?

History doesn't record the fact that a second wife ever gave her husband much chance to mourn over his first one.

Why?

That isn't what she married him for.

She might give him cause to mourn, though she might not give him a chance, eh?

There's no law in the matrimonial economy against it?

Do widowers make good husbands?

About as good as any other kind of men.

Doesn't their experience have an improving tendency?

Not necessarily.

Why is that?

They have to learn all over again.

But you have said widows improve on themselves. Then why not widowers?

A woman can learn more by experience in a minute than a man can in a lifetime, and even then a widow doesn't know it all.

Do widows and widowers marry?

Quite often.

And happily?

Quite as much so as if they were amateurs.

The old love doesn't appear to have a serious effect upon the new?

Apparently not.

Isn't it more appropriate that widows and widowers should marry each other?

In one regard, at least, it is, that being a mutual understanding that references to the virtues of the deceased for purposes of comparison shall be omitted.

That's worth considering?

On the opinion of those who have tried the other plan I might say that it was.

How old is the widower we are talking about?

Forty-five.

Not too old to marry again?

They never get too old for that.

In their own opinion, you mean?

No, in the opinion of some woman, old or young.

Don't some marry widowers out of pity?

Hardly, unless it be pity for their own lot.

Widowers are not so popular in matrimonial circles as widows are, are they?

Some widowers are not.

Which are not?

Those who have children.

What difference does that make?

The average woman is prejudiced against becoming a stepmother.

Isn't becoming a stepfather as objectionable?

Not as a rule.

Why?

Because the man is not so closely associated with the children as a woman is and hasn't the opportunities to be ugly.

But a woman needn't be ugly, need she?

Possibly she need not, but it requires the temper of an angel to be lovely always to children, unless they are one's own.

Has a man any better temper than a woman?

No, but he has a great deal less to try his temper, especially in the household affairs.

Is this widower attentive to any particular woman?

Not yet, but he is beginning to take notice.

I presume he will marry a woman of 35 or thereabouts.

Not if he can get one of 25 or thereabouts.

How old was the wife he lost?

She was five years his junior.

And he wants one twenty years his junior?

Not especially.

No?

Twenty-five years his junior would suit his ideas better.

Why is that?

Because he can get one of that age if he makes the effort.

He must be rich?

Well, he's comfortable.

How about the rich widower?

He's a snap.

But what if he has children?

His money can hire nurses.

Being a stepmother under such circumstances is not so objectionable then?

Circumstances alter cases.

Is a woman so mercenary?

Oh, no, she isn't mercenary.

But she looks out for No. 1?

No. She looks out for No. 2.

Are widowers quite as giddy as widows?

Just about, though in different form.

What form, for instance?

They pose as monuments of sorrow and smile through their tears.

I don't quite understand.

No man does until he becomes a widower.

Does a widower consult his children before taking a second wife?

If he is a sensible man he does, and he also makes material provision for them, if he is a man of any means.

Why should he do that?

To prevent future misunderstandings.

Do all widowers marry again?

No more than all widows do.

Why not?

Because there is in some hearts a devotion which, when once it has been exercised, never again finds an object to move it.

Is that love?

It is something deeper and grander and nobler than may be found in our present definition or conception of love.

And is it common to men and women?

Common to both, and yet most uncommon.

And beautiful?

More beautiful than anything else finite.

Shouldn't a widower with children marry?

Yes, if he can get the right kind of a woman.

What is the right kind?

That is one of the things no fellow can find out until he tries.

But he should try just the same?

That's what everybody says.

And everybody ought to know?

It seems so.

Does the widower think about it that way?

Well, if the children are quite young and plenty, and there's no place for them to go, it sometimes occurs to him that he should think of them and marry accordingly; otherwise he thinks about himself first.

Can a woman be found who will marry such a widower?

Oh, yes.

Does she know what she is getting into?

As a rule, she hopes the Lord will give her strength.

And does He?

She has her doubts every now and then.

What about the widower who marries three or four times?

He has phenomenal confidence in and appreciation of womankind.

Is that why he marries so often?

Of course; for if each wife is a success, then it strengthens his belief; and if each one is not, he keeps on keeping at it in the hope that the next one will prove he was not mistaken in his original opinion of the sex.

The women should admire such a man, shouldn't they?

They do, or he wouldn't be able to get so many of them.

Are widowers happy?

Not until they marry again.

Then they are never happy?

I presume not.

Will a bachelor marry as soon as a widower?

Ask the woman they are trying to get.